



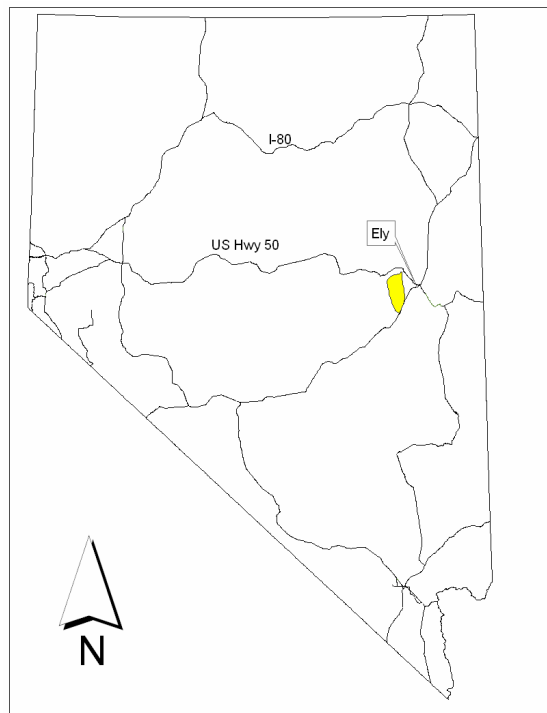
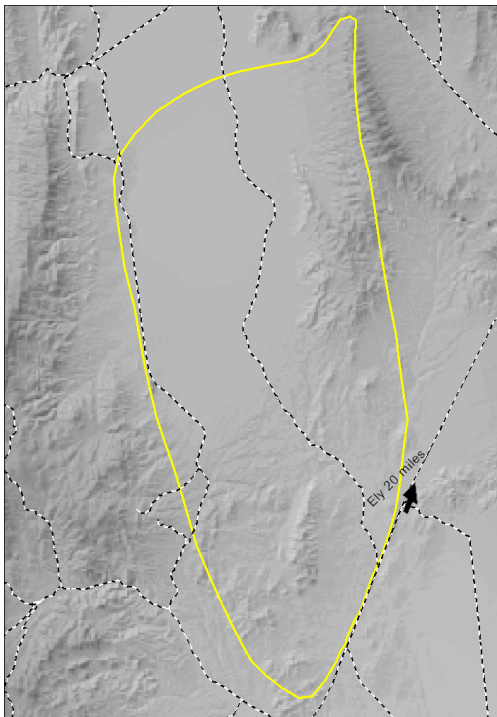
## Jakes Wash Herd Management Area White Pine County, Nevada



### **Location/Habitat**

The Jakes Wash Herd Management Area (HMA) is located approximately 20 miles west of Ely, Nevada, in White Pine County. The HMA comprises 153,663 acres of public land. The majority of the HMA lies within Jakes Valley, with the eastern side of the HMA reaching up into Kimberly Mountain. South of the Egan Range, the HMA also overlaps portions of Giroux Wash and Jakes Wash. Highway 50 is located approximately four miles north of the HMA's northern boundary, and Highway 6 borders the southeastern side. Gravel roads cut along the western side of the HMA, as well as north-south through the middle of the HMA in Jakes Valley. Numerous two-track roads access a majority of the rest of the HMA.

Elevation within the Jakes Wash HMA ranges from 6,235 feet in Jakes and Giroux Wash, to 9,038 feet at the top of Kimberly Mountain. Water within the HMA is very limited. Three stock watering ponds are the only waters in the northern to middle portion of the HMA. These ponds and reservoirs are filled with winter/spring runoff as well as water from ranchers who have water rights from nearby Illipah reservoir. Two of these reservoirs regularly go dry near mid- to late summer. Water is available when the livestock operators pump three wells in the southern end of the HMA, but that is only for a few months out of the year. The only other water sources are two springs located in the southern end of the HMA.



The climate in Jakes Valley HMA is typical of the Great Basin. Summertime temperatures can occasionally reach greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, with winter temperatures in Jakes Valley frequently dropping below zero. Jakes Valley is particularly cold during the winter, with fog frequently common. Precipitation in the area can range from less than eight inches in the valley bottom to up to sixteen inches in the mountains. Precipitation generally comes in the form of winter snowfall and spring rains, with occasional summer thunderstorms.

Wildlife in the area is mainly antelope, with occasional mule deer and elk in the higher elevations which have tree cover. Other wildlife includes mountain lions, coyotes, bobcats, kit foxes, and jackrabbit. The valley is important sage grouse habitat, and a known sage grouse lek (mating ground) is located on the north end of the HMA. Bald eagles, ferruginous hawks, and Peregrine falcons can also be sighted occasionally.

Jakes Wash HMA has traditionally been grazed by domestic livestock including cattle and sheep since the 1800s. Cattle grazing use continues today, as well as sheep trailing through the area each year.

#### Vegetation

Jakes Wash HMA includes one of the most unusual vegetation areas within the Ely BLM District. In the bottom of Jakes Valley is one of the largest, continuous white sage sites within North America. Surrounding the white sage is sagebrush/bunchgrass plant communities, followed by pinyon-juniper woodlands. Most of the area is sagebrush, with open/sparse pinyon-juniper along the fringes of the HMA. On the top of the Egan Range the pinyon-juniper forms closed-canopy woodlands with little to no understory.

#### Herd Description

The Jake Wash wild horse herd is managed by the Ely BLM District for an appropriate management level of 1 to 21 wild horses, a figure established in 2003. A majority of the wild horses graze in the south end of Jakes Valley during the spring, and the pinyon-juniper area in the south is grazed year-round. Wild horses use Jakes Valley until the water dries up, and then move south or outside the HMA in late summer.

Wild horses in the area possess a variety of colors. A gather in 2001 showed the color composition to be 31 percent bay, 21 percent sorrel, 17 percent brown, 14 percent buckskin, 9 percent palomino, 5 percent black, with other incidental colors being roan, white, and grulla. The wild horses average 13 to 15 hands tall, and are of good conformation.

There is no specific information about the breed of horse that resides in this herd, but the wild horses are likely to be descendants of horses which escaped or were turned loose by ranchers, miners, and settlers. Likely breeds contributing to the herd include Quarter horse, Thoroughbred, Morgan, and several draft breeds. There is also some evidence that the Army Remount Service was active in the area. When they were in operation during

the early 1900s through 1940, remount stallions of various breeds were released on the range to upgrade the existing herd.



*Wild horses during a 2001 emergency gather in Jakes Wash HMA (BLM photo).*